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FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8062  
INFO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ROME 011920

STATE FOR PRM, IO, AND RWANDA TASK FORCE

USAID FOR AA/BHR AND BHR/OFDA

NAIROBI FOR DART/RWANDA AND REDSO

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ARCHIE M BOLSTER  
DATE/CASE ID: 05 MAY 2011 201005065

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E.0.12356: N/A

TAGS: AORC, PREF, EAID, UN, WFP, UNHCR

SUBJECT: WFP BRIEFING OF PERM REPS ON RWANDA SITUATION

1. SUMMARY: WORLD FOOD PROGRAM (WFP) HELD AN UNPRECEDENTED BRIEFING OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES ON JULY 25. THE SUBJECT WAS THE RWANDA REFUGEE CRISIS. THIS BRIEFING, SUGGESTED TO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BERTINI BY FODAG, WAS A SIGNAL SUCCESS. BY GENERAL AGREEMENT IT WILL BE HELD WEEKLY TO UPDATE PREM REPS ON THE SITUATION. BERTINI AND STAFF PROVIDED DETAILED INFORMATION, DESCRIBED BELOW, WHILE SEVERAL NATIONS - BELGIUM, CANADA, NETHERLANDS, SPAIN, SWITZERLAND - ANNOUNCED PLEDGES. UGANDA PROPOSED USE OF KABALE AIRPORT IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE COUNTRY, BESIDES ENTEBBE. U.S. USED THE OCCASION TO PRESS FOR AID TO RWANDA, BUT ALSO TO MAKE THE CASE FOR CLOSER COORDINATION AMONG U.S. AGENCIES, CLOSER DONOR

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COORDINATION AT ROME, AND, FOR THE FUTURE, MUCH MORE EFFORT IN PREVENTIVE ACTION BY U.N. AGENCIES, NGO'S, AND NEIGHBORS OF POTENTIAL CRISIS AREAS. END SUMMARY.

2. ON JULY 25 WFP CARRIED OUT A SUGGESTION MADE TO IT EARLIER BY FODAG, I.E., THAT WFP BRIEF ROME PERM REPS ON THE RWANDA CRISIS. THE TWO-HOUR BRIEFING PROVED HIGHLY INFORMATIVE. IT WAS SO WELL RECEIVED THAT WFP WILL BRIEF PERM REPS WEEKLY. MOREOVER, THE U.S., SUPPORTED BY FRANCE, PROPOSED PERIODIC BRIEFINGS ON ALL EMERGENCIES ADDRESSED BY WFP.

3. SALIENT POINTS FROM THE BRIEFING; GIVEN BY BERTINI AND KEY STAFF, WERE AS FOLLOWS:

--WFP, WHICH HAD PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF RWANDAN REFUGEES IN ZAIRE TAKEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR FEEDING 2.5 MILLION PEOPLE, NOW PLANS FOR A CASELOAD OF 4.0 MILLION. (THIS REFLECTS INCREASES WITHIN ZAIRE AND DECREASES WITHIN TANZANIA);

--THE NEW SYSTEM OF "RAPID RESPONSE TEAMS" HAD WORKED WELL AND SWIFTLY; WFP PERSONNEL WERE AT GOMA WITHIN HOURS AFTER THE REFUGEE POPULATION THERE HAD BECOME A

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CRITICAL MASS; BUT "DEEP FIELD COMMUNICATIONS" COULD  
HAVE ENHANCED THE WORK OF THE TEAMS (SEPTEL FOLLOWS);

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--CHOLERA HAD CLAIMED 8-10 THOUSAND LIVES AND WAS  
INCREASING, BUT ARRIVAL OF CLEAN WATER, FOOD, AND  
MEDICAL SUPPLIES WOULD REDUCE THE DEATH TOLL MARKEDLY  
WITHIN A FEW DAYS;

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--WFP ESTIMATED FOOD REQUIREMENTS FOR GOMA AT A  
MINIMUM OF 600 TONS DAILY. A THIRD OF THIS COULD  
ULTIMATELY BE PROVIDED BY AIR. THE BALANCE WOULD  
ARRIVE VIA WFP TRUCKS (CRITICALLY NECESSARY), BY OTHER  
AGENCIES' PROVISIONS (E.G., ICRC), OR FROM THE  
REFUGEES' OWN SUPPLIES;

--A FEW THOUSAND REFUGEES HAD ALREADY RETURNED TO  
RWANDA, IN RESPONSE TO THE GOR APPEAL. NOW IT WAS  
NECESSARY TO ENSURE FOOD AVAILABILITY FOR THE  
RETURNEES WITHIN RWANDA. (N.B. WFP IS PROPOSING TO  
UNHCR THAT WFP TRUCKS BE USED TO TRANSPORT REFUGEES  
BACK TO RWANDA.);

--WFP HAD BEEN ABLE TO BORROW COMMODITIES AMOUNTING TO  
22,000 TONS; ENRICHED FOODS WERE WFP'S FOCUS FOR AT  
LEAST THE FIRST FORTNIGHT (AND, FOR EXAMPLE, SOME  
ITEMS, SUCH AS THE U.K. DONATED ENRICHED BISCUITS,  
REQUIRED NO WATER FOR PREPARATION). WFP HAD HAD

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ENOUGH CASH ON HAND TO ENABLE IT TO PURCHASE  
FOODSTUFFS WITHIN AFRICA;

--AVAILABLE STORAGE FACILITIES INCLUDE  
D 2,000 TON  
CAPACITY AT GOMA, 3,000 TON CAPACITY AT BUKAVU;

--OF 100 TRUCKS REQUIRED FOR THE OPERATION, ONLY 30  
HAVE BEEN MOBILIZED. AN ADDITIONAL 15 ARE TO BE  
AIRLIFTED BY U.S. FROM AQABA TO ENTEBBE; A REQUEST FOR  
AIRLIFT OF AN ADDITIONAL 35 TRUCKS FROM AQABA TO  
MOMBASA IS PENDING (SEPTEL FOLLOWS). ROAD CONDITIONS  
IN EASTERN ZAIRE, HOWEVER, WERE WORSENING, DUE TO  
HEAVY LOADS AND THE RAINFALL.

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4. CONCERNING FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS, WFP ANNOUNCED IT  
WAS SETTING UP A PROCESS FOR COLLECTING CONSOLIDATED  
INFORMATION ON CONTRIBUTIONS MADE TO ALL ENTITIES  
PROVIDING RELIEF IN THE RWANDAN REGION.

5. WFP EXPRESSED ITS NEED FOR CASH, HIGH-NUTRITION  
FOODSTUFFS, TRANSPORT, AND BULK FOODS. BERTINI ASKED  
PERM REPS TO REQUEST THEIR GENEVA COUNTERPARTS TO  
PRESS UNHCR ON PROVISION OF SHELTER FOR THE REFUGEES  
AT GOMA.

6. THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES ANNOUNCED PLEDGES FOR  
RWANDAN REFUGEE RELIEF:

--NETHERLANDS: USD 5 MILLION CASH TO WFP;

--CANADA: CANADIAN DOLLARS 10 MILLION (AGENCY OR  
AGENCIES UNSPECIFIED);

--BELGIUM: USD 1 MILLION CASH (UNSPECIFIED);

--SWITZERLAND: SWISS FRANCS 4 MILLION OF WHICH 1  
MILLION CASH FOR WFP;

--SPAIN: AN AS YET UNSPECIFIED CASH GRANT TO WFP.

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(N.B. FRANCE WAS PARTICULARLY COMPLIMENTARY TOWARDS  
THE "MASSIVE" U.S. CONTRIBUTION ANNOUNCED BY PRESIDENT  
CLINTON.)

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7. U.S. REPS AT THE MEETING MADE THE FOLLOWING

POINTS, INTER ALIA:

--THE NEED FOR U.N.-WIDE COORDINATION WAS EVIDENCED BY  
THE PLETHORA OF UNPRIORITYED REQUESTS FOR US.  
AIRLIFT, AS WELL AS BY UNORTHODOX FOOD PURCHASES  
(7,000 MT OF CSB) MADE BY UNHCR IN SOUTH AFRICA FROM  
THE SAME SUPPLIER WFP HAD INTENDED TO USE (THE FRENCH  
PERM REP ENCAPSULATED THE SITUATION AS THE UNHCR  
STEPPING TOO FAR OUT IN FRONT, DHA LAGGING TOO FAR  
BEHIND);

--THE RWANDAN CRISIS HAD DEMONSTRATED THE NEED FOR  
PREVENTIVE ACTION, SUCH AS CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR  
PREPOSITIONING STOCKS, MOBILIZING TRANSPORT,  
ESTABLISHING COMMUNICATIONS NETS, ADDRESSING HEALTH  
EMERGENCIES, AND COALESCING NEIGHBORING COUNTRY  
SUPPORT, WHILE IN THE LONGER TERM DEVISING AID AND  
DEVELOPMENT MEASURES TO HELP PREVENT OUTBREAKS OF  
EMERGENCIES IN THE FIRST PLACE;

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--PERIODIC BRIEFINGS FOR PERM REPS AT ROME SHOULD OCCUR, NOT SOLELY ON RWANDA BUT ON ALL EMERGENCY ACTIONS WFP UNDERTOOK;

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--PERM REPS SHOULD INTENSIFY THEIR COORDINATION WITH NEW YORK AND GENEVA COUNTERPARTS, WHILE STRENGTHENING THEIR COORDINATION HERE WITH WFP AND OTHER ROME-BASED U.N. AGENCIES.

OTHER PERM REPS RAISED NO OBJECTION TO THE PRECEDING, BUT AFTERWARDS EXPRESSED CONCURRENCE AND APPRECIATION TO U.S. REPS FOR THESE POINTS. BY GENERAL AGREEMENT WFP IS TO PREPARE A SCHEDULE OF PERIODIC BRIEFINGS ON EMERGENCIES.

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8. MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.

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